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Corfe Castle is reputed to have been founded in Saxon times by King Edgar, but it is difficult to trace any existing portions of the Saxon fortifications. The building has frequently occupied a prominent position in history. Here Edward the Martyr was treacherously murdered by Elfreda, his stepmother, in A.D. 978; Edward the Second was a prisoner here in 1327; and this stronghold was the scene of several fierce struggles during the course of the Civil War. It was surrendered to the Parliamentarians in 1646 and reduced by them to a state of ruins.

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